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### Relief to Indian citizens.

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## RELIEF TO INDIAN CITIZENS.

FEBRUARY 15, 1893.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. KEM, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, submitted the following

### REPORT:

[To accompany S. 2068.]

The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (S. 2068) to extend relief to Indian citizens, and for other purposes, have had the same under consideration, and report it back with an amendment, and recommend that it do pass as amended.

Under the act of February 28, 1887, allotting lands in severalty to Indians on the various reservations, many Indians became citizens of the United States and of the State or Territory in which said land is located, with all of the rights and privileges pertaining thereto; but in doing this the act fails to lay on these Indian citizens all of the responsibilities and burdens full citizenship naturally carries with it. By exempting their lands from taxation for a period of twenty-five years they relieve them from bearing their proportionate share of the burden of government, and increases the burden of the white citizen by that much, which, in some localities, is becoming too grievous to be borne.

As an illustration of this we cite the following facts as illustrating the situation in Thurston County, Nebr.: This county was created March 28, 1889. The number of Indian citizens in 1891 was 2,400; white citizens same date, 1,100; land owned by Indians and not taxed, 240,000 acres; owned by whites and taxed, 20,000 acres; personal tax paid by Indians per capita, 41 cents; personal and land tax paid by whites per capita, \$8.32; total tax paid by 2,400 Indian citizens, \$89; total tax paid by 1,100 white citizens, \$8,835. Indian prosecutions, State cases, have cost the county \$4,400; white prosecutions, State cases, for same period have cost the county only \$470.

This shows clearly the great injustice and unequal burden under which these white settlers are struggling, and calls loudly for adjustment.

The object of the bill is to so adjust this burden that it may bear on the white citizen only in just proportion to the whole number of citizens, red and white, and at the same time preserve inviolate the contract made with these Indians under which they received their lands in severalty and became citizens.

That part of the act referred to and bearing on this point is as follows (Dawes severalty act, approved February 8, 1887):

SEC. 5. That upon the approval of the allotments provided for in this act by the Secretary of the Interior, he shall cause patents to issue therefor in the name of the allottees, which patents shall be of the legal effect, and declare that the United

States does and will hold the land thus allotted, for the period of twenty-five years, in trust for the sole use and benefit of the Indian to whom such allotment shall have been made, or, in case of his decease, of his heirs according to the laws of the State or Territory where such land is located, and that at the expiration of said period the United States will convey the same by patent to said Indian, or his heirs as aforesaid, in fee, discharged of said trust and free of all charge or incumbrance whatsoever.

Also in same section the following:

And the sums agreed to be paid by the United States as purchase money for any portion of any such reservation shall be held in the Treasury of the United States for the sole use of the tribe or tribes of Indians to whom such reservations belonged, and the same, with interest thereon at 3 per cent per annum, shall be at all times subject to appropriation by Congress for the education and civilization of such tribe or tribes of Indians or the members thereof.

By first quotation of section 5 of said act we see clearly the Indian's land can not pay tax for a period of twenty-five years from date of act, and must go to the Indian at that time free of all incumbrances and liens.

And by second quotation of same section we see equally as clear, that these monies held in trust for these Indians by the Government can only be appropriated by act of Congress for educational purposes.

Therefore, inasmuch as these Indians are the wards of the Government and by act of Congress have become so great a burden to the few white citizens, your committee deem it but just to appropriate the money out of the Treasury, as provided for in the bill.